CLAIMS

I/We claim:

[c1]   1.   A method performed by a computer system for determining when to place an advertisement for an item, the method comprising:

    receiving search result data for searches that include a link for the item in its search result, the search result data for a search indicating a search term, placement of the link within the search result, and whether user selected the link for the item;

    determining based on the received search result data whether users who entered a certain search term subsequently selected the link to the item even though the link was not prominently placed in the search result; and

    when it is determined that users who entered a certain search term subsequently selected the link to the item even though the link was not prominently placed in the search result, indicating to place an advertisement for the item along with the search result for that certain search term wherein the advertisement is prominently placed along with the search result.

[c2]   2.   The method of claim 1 wherein the link is not prominently placed in the search result when it is not placed on the first page of the search result.

[c3]   3.   The method of claim 2 wherein the advertisement is prominently placed along with the search result when it is placed on the first page of the search result.

[c4]   4.   The method of claim 1 wherein the search result data is generated by a search engine service.

[c5]   5.   The method of claim 1 wherein the search result data is received from a search engine service.

[c6]   6.   The method of claim 1 wherein the determining includes calculating a metric to indicate whether an advertisement for the item should be placed along with search results for a certain search term, the metric being based on number of times users selected a link for the item that was not prominently placed in a search result.

[c7]   7.   The method of claim 6 wherein the calculating factors in relative prominence of the placement of the links in search results.

[c8]   8.   The method of claim 1 wherein the link is not prominently placed in the search result when it is not initially visible to the user.

[c9]   9.   The method of claim 1 wherein the search result data is derived from information sources.

[c10]   10.   The method of claim 9 wherein the information sources include web pages.

[c11]   11.   The method of claim 9 wherein the information sources include content not generally accessible through the Internet.

[c12]   12.   The method of claim 11 wherein the content is the text of a book.

[c13]   13.   A method in a computer system for determining when to place an advertisement for an item, the method comprising:

determining whether a user selected a link to the item when the link was included on a page other than the first page of a search result of a search using a search term; and

when it is determined that a user selected a link to the item when the link was included on a page other than the first page of a search result of a search using a search term, requesting an advertisement to be placed on the first page of a search result for a search using that search term.

[c14]   14.   The method of claim 13 wherein a search engine service provides the link of a search result without payment of an advertising fee.

[c15]   15.   The method of claim 13 wherein a fee is paid for requesting payment of the advertisement.

[c16]   16.   The method of claim 13 wherein the advertisement is paid for on a cost-per-selection basis.

[c17]   17.   The method of claim 13 wherein the links are provided without charge to a vendor of the item and the requested advertisement is paid for by the vendor on a cost-per-selection basis.

[c18]   18.   The method of claim 13 wherein a fee paid for the advertisement associated with the search term is based on prominence of the placement of the link in the search result and number of selections of the link to the item of search results.

[c19]   19.   The method of claim 18 wherein a larger fee is paid when the placement is less prominent.

[c20]   20.   The method of claim 13 wherein a link is a reference to a web page associated with the item.

[c21]   21.   The method of claim 13 wherein the determining includes calculating a metric to indicate whether an advertisement for the item should be placed along with search result for a certain search term, the metric being based on number of times users selected a link for the item that was not placed on the first page of the search result.

[c22]   22.   The method of claim 21 wherein the requesting is performed based on the calculated metric.

[c23]   23.   The method of claim 21 wherein the metric is calculated based on a frequency associated with the search term.

[c24]   24.   A computer system for determining when to place an advertisement for an item, comprising:

        means for determining whether a user selected a link to the item when the link was not prominently displayed with a search result of a search using a search term; and

        means for when it is determined that a user selected a link to the item when the link was not prominently displayed with a search result of a search using a search term, requesting an advertisement to be placed on so that it is prominently displayed with a search result for a search using that search term.

[c25]   25.   The computer system of claim 24 wherein a search engine service provides the link of a search result without payment of an advertising fee.

[c26]   26.   The computer system of claim 24 wherein a fee is paid for requesting payment of the advertisement.

[c27]   27.   The computer system of claim 24 wherein the advertisement is paid for on a cost-per-selection basis.

[c28] 28. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the links are provided without charge to a vendor of the item and the requested advertisement is paid for by the vendor on a cost-per-selection basis.

[c29] 29. The computer system of claim 24 wherein a fee paid for the advertisement associated with the search term is based on prominence of the placement of the link in the search result and number of selections of the link to the item of search results.

[c30] 30. The computer system of claim 29 wherein a larger fee is paid when the placement is less prominent.

[c31] 31. The computer system of claim 24 wherein a link is a reference to a web page associated with the item.

[c32] 32. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the determining includes calculating a metric to indicate whether an advertisement for the item should be placed along with search result for a certain search term, the metric being based on number of times users selected a link for the item that was not prominently placed with the search result.

[c33] 33. The computer system of claim 32 wherein the requesting is performed based on the calculated metric.

[c34] 34. The computer system of claim 32 wherein the metric is calculated based on a frequency associated with the search term.

[c35] 35. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the link is not prominently displayed when it is not displayed on the first page of the search result.